

Cyprus and Malta: pre-accession strategy, implementation of operations

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PURPOSE : to present the 2002 report from the Commission on Phare and the pre-accession instruments for Cyprus, Malta and Turkey. **CONTENT** : this annual report aims to assess the progress of Phare in the pre-accession countries. Moreover, for the first time this report also assesses the pre-accession instruments for Cyprus, Malta and Turkey. The Phare Programme is one of three pre-accession instruments financed by the European Communities to assist the applicant countries of central Europe in their preparations for joining the European Union. Originally created to assist Poland and Hungary in 1989, today the Phare Programme encompasses the 10 candidate countries of central and eastern Europe - Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. In addition, the three non-Phare countries, Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, receive pre-accession assistance either directed towards financing activities on priority operations in order to prepare the countries for accession (Cyprus and Malta), or to provide an accession-driven approach to financial assistance (Turkey). Between 2000-2002, Phare provided some EUR 5 billion in co-financing for Institution Building support via Twinning and Technical Assistance, and for Investment Support. The objective is to assist the candidate countries in their efforts to : - strengthen their public administrations and institutions to function effectively inside the Union; - promote convergence with the European Community's extensive legislation; - reduce the need for transition periods; - promote Economic and Social Cohesion. In 2002, total Phare commitments amounted to EUR 1,699 million. Programming was based on the Guidelines for Phare which were further revised in 2002 in order to accompany changes to the Cross Border Co-operation (CBC) Regulation, to accommodate the unique approach required in the area of nuclear safety and to emphasise the transition to Extended Decentralisation Implementation System (EDIS). Concerning Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, pre-accession assistance programmes amounted to a total of EUR 168 million in 2002. As regards Malta and Cyprus, this funding was largely dedicated to Institution Building aimed at preparing the two countries for accession. In the case of Turkey, pre-accession financial assistance had an accession-driven emphasis, as the procedures for programming and implementing the pre-accession financial assistance programme to Turkey now mirror those of Phare. The European Commission has increasingly transferred responsibility for the management and implementation of Phare programmes to the authorities in the candidate countries, to prepare them for the decentralised approach to programme management established under the Structural Funds. 2002 saw an increased emphasis on National Programmes designed to address specific weaknesses identified in the annual Regular Reports. Lastly, a technical document which is presented as an annex to this Report contains sections on the programming and implementation of the Phare Programme in the ten beneficiary countries, and on the pre-accession instruments for Cyprus, Malta and Turkey (EC(2003)910).